

Smithsonian acquires legendary race car Miller 91

■ **1929 marvel:** U.S. auto with front-wheel drive showed up Europe's best. *1-12-92*

WASHINGTON (AP) — An American race car that showed up Europe's best six decades ago has been acquired by the Smithsonian Institution in an unusual trade with a private collector.

The Miller 91, designed by Harry Miller, was a technological marvel in 1929, with its front-wheel drive and supercharged straight eight-cylinder engine.

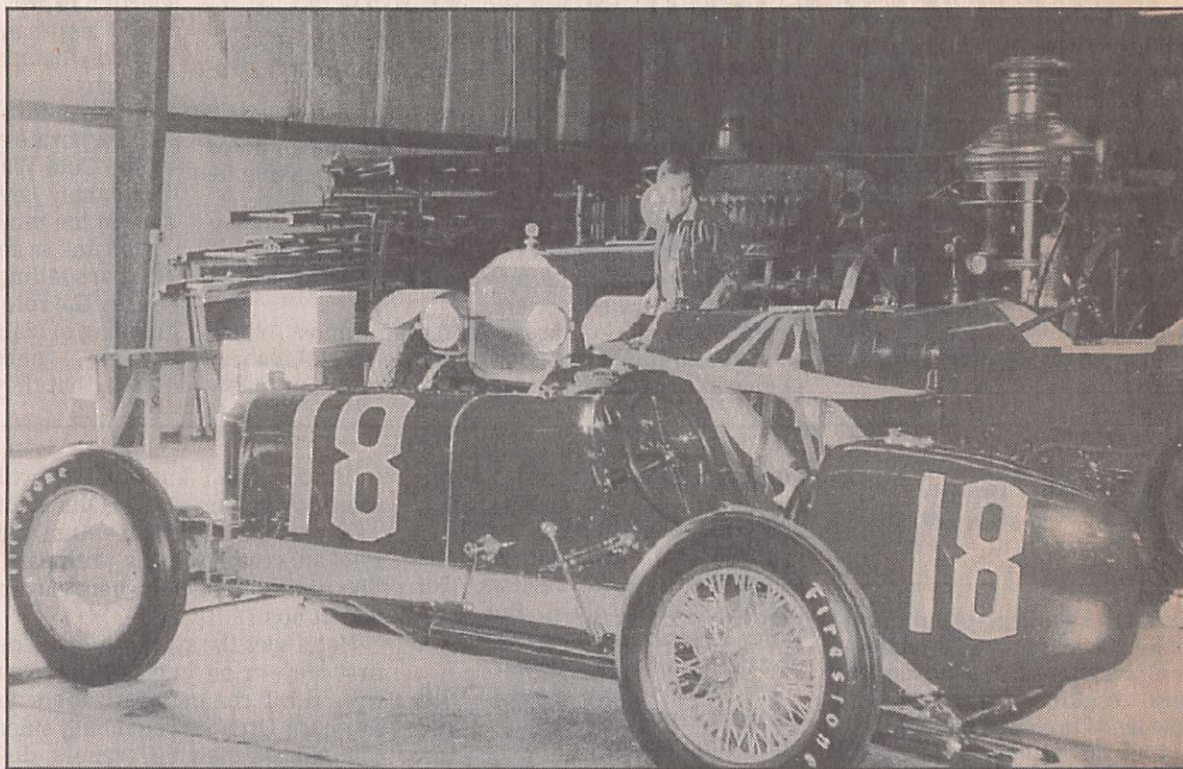
After a transmission failure eliminated it from the Indianapolis 500 that year, the car was shipped to France, where it set a speed record of its class.

The 1,400 pound, cigar-shaped roadster, which hugged a single driver in a body just 20 inches wide, hit 139.6 miles per hour at the Montlhery track near Paris, some 20 mph faster than its European counterparts.

Rule changes blocked another try at Indy, and the Miller "Packard Cable Special" and a second Miller 91 were bought by legendary automaker Ettore Bugatti, who adopted many of their features for his own machines.

In America, Miller's front-wheel-drive design was adapted by Cord for its famous cars of the 1930s.

The Depression drove Miller's company into bankruptcy in 1932, and it was taken over by one of his employees, Fred Offenhauser.



AP photo

A private collector and the institution traded the Miller 91 race car and a 1905 Mercedes.

The engine in the Miller 91 produced some 280 horsepower from just 91.5 cubic inches, about 1,500 cubic centimeters — smaller than many economy cars today. The Offenhauser engines descended from Miller designs remained a major force in American open-wheel racing for another four decades. The last Offenhauser ran at Indianapolis in 1980.

Of the 12 Miller 91s built, only

five still are known to exist and only two are considered very authentic. The Smithsonian now has one, and the other good example is at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's museum.

The "Packard Cable Special" was donated by Robert Rubin of Southampton, N.Y., along with a \$100,000 grant for the motor-sports collection at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

But there was a catch.

In exchange for the Miller, which Rubin had meticulously restored to original condition, Rubin wanted a 1905 Mercedes that the museum had in storage.

Despite a policy that weighs strongly against such arrangements, the deal was made.

William L. Withuhn, the curator of the collection, said it only happened because the museum had already considered the Mercedes as possibly unsuitable for its purposes.

research and development, he said.

Stoltenberg told a news conference the end of the Cold War had made an attack on the old European front-line country less likely, but new tensions were arising that could affect German security. He mentioned the Yugoslav civil war as one example.

"Germany will also in the future need a military defense within the NATO framework to safeguard its security and fulfill its contractual commitments," he said.

The defense minister said the focus would shift from Cold War static defense to rapid deployment and high mobility, in line with NATO's new defense strategy adopted last year.

relationship between the two countries — a relationship in which the United States currently has a \$41 billion annual shortfall with Japan.

"(The) United States and Japan have been discussing this trade problem for over 10 years in the past, and we have made a great headway," Miyazawa said on CNN's "Evans and Novak" program.

"So, I really don't think after this very lengthy, almost exhaustive study there is much we can do or they want to ask us to do," he said, speaking in English.

Miyazawa also said that Japan's markets have not been as restricted as most Americans believe, despite widespread complaints by company executives and politicians of trade barriers.

"Japanese markets are not as closed as most Americans like to think, but not as open as most Japanese people like to believe," he said. "The truth is probably



Kiichi Miyazawa

an agreement to more than double its imports of U.S. auto parts to \$19 billion a year. But auto executives who accompanied Bush on the trip were less than satisfied with the deal.

Miyazawa also said he believes Bush will win reelection in November despite his low approval showing of less than 50 percent in a recent poll and widespread dissatisfaction with his handling of the economy.

Commenting on "Japan bashing" by U.S. politicians and corporate executives, Miyazawa said that the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union may have left Japan as a new national adversary in the minds of some Americans.

"I think in the absence of an adversary out of this Russians falling down, that perhaps somebody has got to play the role as the kind of mental adversary in the thinking of some American people," he said. "That is not fair . . . nobody should really compare Japan with USSR, that they are America's adversary."

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ionists are skeptical, if not downright hostile to that idea. And those whose livelihoods depend on the natural resources that come from public lands are even more so.

In fact, last fall when the Grand Canyon Trust sponsored a three-day symposium to get both sides talking about their differences, a good number on both sides refused to even attend.

"I think the hostility toward wilderness will not be resolved by people talking about it," said Steve Koteff, staff attorney for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.

On the other side, many rural leaders refused to participate in anything sponsored by an environmental organization. "There were a lot of no-shows and a lot of mistrust among those who did show up," said Garfield County Commis-

sioner Louise Liston. "Some looked at who was sponsoring it and refused to attend."

Those who did attend give the symposium mixed reviews. No problems were solved. But, says Hahn, at least the two sides ended up talking with one another.

"A lot of people came in with mistrust and suspicion," Hahn said, "and saying, 'What's your hidden agenda.' By the end of the three days of talking, not everybody agreed with one another, but at least they were sitting at the same table and laughing together."

Liston agrees: "I don't know that it has solved any problems, but the feelings between the environmental groups and the multiple users were a lot less hostile. We were listening to each other, even if nobody changed their minds on the issues."

For most, it was the first time prominent individuals from both camps had ever met in that kind of format to discuss specific issues and potential solutions.

"And I don't know if we will sponsor another one," Hahn said. "There was a lot of momentum and a lot of creative ideas presented. The question now is where do we take it now?"

Hahn sees the symposium as the first step in an ongoing dialogue with rural community leaders in southern Utah in which both sides can express their differences, discuss alternatives to confrontation and perhaps reach some kind of understanding.

The Grand Canyon Trust is hoping to convey one message to rural Utah. "There is a great need for conservation groups to come up with solutions to the problems and be a part of the process in solving the problems," Hahn said. "If we are going to make a difference, then we work together."

That's a welcome message in rural Utah, where environmental activists are traditionally seen as obstructionists bent on eliminating not only livelihoods, but a cultural

heritage. In return, many activists have stereotyped rural Utahns as environmentally insensitive hillbillies.

"It's the first time any of them (conservation groups) have ever expressed an interest in the impact of their actions on the people who actually live down here," Liston said.

One thing both sides agree on is that confrontation inevitably ends up in the courts where both sides will lose.

"We have to at least try to find a middle ground," said Liston, one of southern Utah's most outspoken anti-environmentalists. "Eventually everything comes down to some middle ground. But if we let the courts decide, it will remain a polarized and distrustful situation."

If nothing else, Hahn says the ongoing dialogue should begin to break down generations of mistrust and suspicions on both sides. "The greater the trust level, the more the two sides will be willing to talk," she said.